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2013 Virginia Green Travel Star Awards Green Travel Leader



Green Conference / Convention Center of the Year



Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau Leads the Charge in Electricity Savings for the City of Virginia Beach

The **Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau (VBCVB)** is proud to be a supporting organization for the Virginia Green program. Our two facilities, the **Visitor Information Center** and the **Virginia Beach Convention Center**, are recognized Virginia Green members and have implemented significant electricity saving programs.

The City of Virginia Beach formed a Joint Energy Committee that, in partnership with Dominion (our provider of electricity), comprises members of various city departments and City Public Schools to identify, assess, and implement energy-related activities. The Committee, chaired by Deputy City Manager Dave Hansen, has identified a number of key issues and goals for the City.

One of those goals is to reduce City of Virginia Beach electricity consumption (measured in kilowatt hours) by 10% in five (5) years. VBCVB is happy to report that our two city buildings exceeded that goal! When comparing the base year of Fiscal Year 2008 to Fiscal Year 2013, the **Visitor Information Center used 54% fewer kilowatt hours and the Convention Center used 27% less kilowatt hours!**

The Visitor Information Center can contribute much of the savings to extensive upgrades to the lighting, heating, and cooling systems that were performed in early 2011. The Visitor Information Center achieved the EPA's Energy Star Certification in 2012 – moving their score from a pre-renovation number of 28 up to 82 in 2012. This equated to an energy usage drop of approximately 38%, with an annual savings of more than \$7,200. The center's continuous practices increased its score from an 82 in 2012 to an 85 in 2013. The EPA's ENERGY STAR energy performance scale helps organizations assess how efficiently their buildings use energy relative to similar buildings nationwide.

Similarly, the **Virginia Beach Convention Center (VBCC)** reduced electrical consumption by 27% in 2013 as compared to usage in baseline 2008. The convention center continuously monitors energy consumption as part of their LEED[®] certification, ongoing commitment to the environment, and desire to reduce harmful effects of the hospitality industry on our environment.

VBCC works with our clients and staff to educate them on ways to save energy, knowing every person can make a difference. The building's modern HVAC and lighting systems help in this task, but it also takes the efforts of our dedicated staff to effectively schedule our HVAC equipment and lighting to avoid unnecessary use. In addition, staff monitors outside humidity and temperatures along with the number and type of events and occupancy levels inside the building to know exactly which equipment to use and when. Spaces are only conditioned when needed. Maintenance and repairs are completed early mornings whenever possible to limit the disruption in service during the hottest hours of the summer. All these actions reduce kilowatts used and peak demand, which in turn saves money.

Our latest innovation at VBCC includes the replacement of 192 PAR38 incandescent light bulbs that burned 250 watts each with new LED light bulbs that only use 24 watts per fixture (rather than 250). The upgrades occurred in the first floor of the convention center prefunction areas of the convention center. The energy savings is significant.

Using a simple payback calculation that assumes the cost of electricity stays the same, the new LEDs will pay for themselves in 3.5 years. We are also replacing an additional 500 incandescent and CFL lamps in our 5 meeting suites with the new LED lamps and expect a similar return on investment.

For additional details of the Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau initiatives, please visit these links:

<http://www.vbgov.com/news/pages/selected.aspx?release=1> and click below for VBCVB Energy Program Videos on the City of Virginia Beach webpage at www.vbgov.com/energy:

Visit Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau Virginia Green profile at:
<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/Portals/0/DEQ/PollutionPrevention/VirginiaGreen/vbcc.pdf>

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www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/PollutionPrevention/VirginiaGreen.aspx
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